

Kashmir: Occupation and Resistance

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ABSTRACT:

Kashmir became a part of the Muslim World in the 14th century C E. Under the local Sultans (1325-1585), the Mughals (1586-1752) and the Pathāns (1752-1819), it developed into a state and society with its own peculiar Islamic culture.

Kashmir was colonised by the Sikhs (1819-46) from the Punjab and the Hindū Dogrā Mahārājās (1846-1947). The Muslim Kashmir stood for Islam through the freedom movement during this period. When the movement under the banner of Islam was at its apex and it seemed that the mahkām (colonised / enslaved) Kashmir was about to achieve the goal, India (Bhārat), a newly born nation (Aug 15, 1947), invaded it on Oct. 27, almost 3 months after her own birth . Since then this newly emerging occupying -power through its policies of political deceit, cultural aggression, economic onslaught and deIslamizing educational schemes has given rise to the problem of the IOK (Indian Occupied Kashmir).

The paper narrates the story of the past up to 1988-uprising & throws light on the oppression, persecution and discrimination that the Muslim Kashmir has been witnessing. The form of freedom-movement that followed from 1947 to 1989 is also outlined. In 1989 Jihād Kashmir, a new phase of

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Introduction:

Kashmir (formally and officially the state of Jammū and Kashmir) like Malaya (now Malaysia) became a part of the Muslim World as late as 14th century C E when all its South Asian and the Central Asian neighbors had been the part and parcel of the Umma'h for centuries together almost since the first Islamic century. Kashmir under the local Sultāns (1325-1585), the Mughals of Hindūstan (1586-1752) and the Pathāns of Afghanistan (1752-1819) developed into a region, a state and a society with its own peculiar Islamic culture.

When most of the Muslim countries were colonized by the Western Powers, Kashmir was colonized by the Sikhs (1819-46) from Punjab and the Hindu Dogra Maharajas (1846-1947).

The Muslim Kashmir stood for Islam through the freedom movement during this period. When the movement under the banner of Islam was at its apex and it seemed that the *mahkūm* (colonized / enslaved) Kashmir was about to achieve the goal, as the British colonies in the Muslim world were getting *azādi, merdika, tahrir* and *Hurrīyat*, India (Bhārat), a newly born nation (Aug 15, 1947) invaded it on

Oct 27, almost 3 months after her own birth . Since then this newly emerging Eastern expansionist occupying power through its policies of political deceit, cultural aggression, economic onslaught and deIslamizing educational schemes has given rise to the IOK (Indian Occupied Kashmir).

The paper, for obvious reasons narrating the story of the past up to 1988 uprising in present tense, throws light on the oppression, persecution and discrimination that the Muslim Kashmir has been witnessing. Alongside the form of freedom movement that followed from 1947 to 1989 is also outlined . In 1989 *Jihād Kashmir*, a new phase of the movement that invited the attention of the world begins and thus the paper helps to understand the background of the genesis of this new phase.

The Genesis of the Muslim Society in Kashmir

With the advent of Arab Muslims in Sindh and its adjoining places, Kashmir also was exposed to Islam. Individuals and groups of Muslims in different capacities entered the state. The mass and the large scale conversion, however, took place only in the 8th century A.H / 14th century A.D. The credit goes to the great missionary ‘*alim* of the century Mir Sayid Ali Hamdani (R.A) popularly known as Ami-i- Kabir and Shah-i-Hamdan. This great son of Islam worked hard for the all-round islamization of this region. His movement with a definite methodology and missionary zeal created the Islamic Society in Kashmir.

Through 700 Sayids and workers who accompanied him from Iran, Amir-i-Kabir himself a great Persian scholar and poet introduced his native language in the state which continued to be the official and

literary language of the Muslim Society of Kashmir for about five centuries, and has marked an impact even on the local spoken languages. Kashmir had no set economy till Amir-i-Kabir set foot on its soil. Like all primitive economies it was pastoral and agricultural. Shah-i-Hamdan introduced arts, agriculture, and handicrafts that are the pride of the State now. The Persian artists and artisans accompanying him introduced and developed shawl -manufacturing, carpet weaving, wood carving, papier-mâché etc. in the State. Chinār, the king of trees, and beloved of poets, was introduced from Iran. A miniature Iran, with all arts and crafts, and a culture was created. Even the fruits that form a peculiarity of Kashmir now, were introduced in the due course of time by local Muslim Sultans. It was Mir Sayed Ali Hamdani who created an Islamic political society in Kashmir. The gap between the local Muslim rulers, and the ruled Muslims seems to have been bridged. The Sayyid, his disciples, and his successors were instrumental in introducing *Shāria'h* (Islamic Laws). Amir-i-Kabir's great monumental work *Dhakhiratul Maluk*, a book on political ethics and his letters to the rulers speak high of his socio-political consciousness. Through the band of scholars accompanying him, he introduced Islamic *'ulūm* in Kashmir. The very system of knowledge was Islamized. Thus Muslim Society of Kashmir was born with Islam as its basis, and affinity and affiliation with the world of Islam.

The Muslim Society in Kashmir continued to thrive under Muslim Sultans till 1819 when the Sikh rulers of Punjab grabbed the State. The minority Sikh rule over the Muslims perpetrated the worst type of oppression and tyranny. The Anglo-Sikh war in 1846 put an end to the Sikh rule. The State was, however, sold for 7.5 million Nanak Shahi

Rupees to the Hindū Dogrās, who had helped the British in defeating the Sikhs. The 1846 Sale Treaty of Amritsar started the frightful Dogrā (Hindū) rule over the Muslim Society in Kashmir. The Muslims in Pūnch and some other areas started a jihād (fight) against the Dogrās as well as their British allies. Crushed by the forces of oppression, the Mujahidin had kindled a torch of jihad which started eleven years later in the sub-continent.

The Dogrā rule in the State was imposed as a result of an inhuman, persecuting and oppressive treaty of sale. A full nation was sold by a power having no historical, political, legal, or cultural right to do so. No stone was left unturned by the Dogrās in looting and devastating the majority Muslim Society. The Muslims forming the 80% population of the State were now at the mercy of the merciless Hindū minority, the Kashmiri Pandits. The Muslims were the cultivators and the tillers while the estates were owned by the Pandits. Strange types of taxes were levied. *Baiger*, the forced labor was imposed on the Muslim youth.

The present Predicament [1947-88]:

The Liberation Movement in Kashmir infused by scholars like Sir Muhammad Iqbal and Allama Anwar Shah Kashmiri, emerged in 1931 when the Dogrās challenged the Muslim sentiments by banning the Khutba'h (Speech) in the Central Idgā'h of Jammū and desecrating the Holy Qurā'n in Jammū jail. Within a few years the Islamic Liberation Movement led by the J&K Muslim Conference spread throughout State. The Indian nationalist leaders could not tolerate the Islamic movement in Kashmir. They befriended, and bewitched some Kashmiri leaders. The

movement was sabotaged. Kashmiri nationalism as the basis of newly formed National Conference in 1938 was introduced paving way for the Indian occupation of the State.

In 1947 the sub-continent saw the end of the British Rāj, succeeded by two independent states: India and Pakistan. In the words of Alastair Lamb, “if the principles upon which Pakistan was founded had any validity, Kashmir should go to the new Islamic state. Yet India had acted in Kashmir as if she were the sole heir to British India, and in total disregard of the communal issue. In Kashmir the Pakistanis were treated as if they were outsiders with no legitimate rights and interests.”¹

The despotic Dogrā Mahārāja'h made accession of the State to the Indian Union as a temporary measure to cope with specific crises. India assured that the ratification lay in the hands of the people. This argument is strengthened by several UN resolutions. The Muslim Kashmiris through a jihād liberated a big part of the State from the Dogrās and the Indian occupying forces. The false pledges and promises of plebiscite led to the ceasefire. The Indian diplomats and statesmen followed a dual policy. They accepted and acknowledged the partition of the sub-continent on communal lines but at the same time they, as Alastair Lamb puts it, have been continuously questioning the validity of partition. They deny, for instance, that Pakistan is a successor State to the British Raj. It is, they say, a new state. Somehow, the implication is clear enough, the British Raj in its Indian republican reincarnation lost territory in 1947 to an alien power.²

The Tashkent Declaration of 1966 and the Shimla'h Agreement that followed the Indo- Pak war of 1971 had neither to ask nor to offer anything to the Muslims of Kashmir. The Muslim Society of J&K was

easily ignored. The cease fire line between the two countries changed into the *Line of Actual Control* practically acknowledging and recognizing the status quo.

Cultural Aggression:

The Dogrā rule (1846-1947) and its successors, the Indian occupying forces who rule through their stooges worked , continuously for the destruction and de-Islamisation of the Muslim Society in Kashmir.

All the means are used by the Imperialism to change the Muslim culture in the State. The educational system in the State is gradually changed to suit the interests of the colonizer. The languages that determined the political ideology and the integration of various units of the State are gradually discouraged. Urdu, the only unifying mediums of expression in the State is reduced to the position of an optional language in the schools. English and especially Hindi are developed at the cost of Urdu. The Jammū and Kashmir Cultural Academy is developing and promoting pre-Islamic Sanskritised Kashmiri. The Kashmiri encyclopedia published by it is an apt example to show how Persio-Arabic elements of the Kashmiri language are deleted. The A.I.R and the Indian TV performed the duty of cultural and linguistic colonization at a higher and wider level. The Dogri, Kashmiri, and Ladhāki are promoted to replace Urdu, and grow the narrow linguistic chauvinism to cut the roots of cultural and political integration of the Muslim Society in J&K, thereby end its power to combat the cultural, political, and economic aggression.

The Radio and the TV work for the de-Islamization of the society in a peculiar and effective way. Islam is painted and presented as a source of backwardness and contempt. The Muslims are presented as

incapable, ignorant, and worthless. Pandit Pushkār Bhān's serial *MĀCHĀMA* running for about two decades has all the folly and idiocy to attribute to Muslims. They are characterized as *Dādās* and *Machāmās*, simpletons, idiots and failures in every field. TV serial *HAZAR DASTAN* is another such example.

The introduction and imposition of the Hindū culture on the Muslims is duty of the State and its agents. The nationalist leaders, the stooges of imperialism, express their pleasure over attending and participating in Hindū festivals and visiting the Hindu shrines in anti-Islamic manner. They happily equate all these ceremonies with those of the Muslims. The popularized festivals among Muslims which have some similarities with the Hindū festivals are encouraged. The government provides the facilities and makes arrangements for the same. Such programs are broadcast and telecast repeatedly, while as Islamic gatherings, seminars, and conferences are not only blacked out but even usually banned. The conception of unity of all religions is fostered to combat the emergence of Islamic consciousness. The beginning of assimilation is made. An Indian Islam is in the making, directed, and supervised by the colonizers. Symposia, seminars, debates and conferences are held for the purpose. New places of worship to dilute the impact of Islam are developed. At Batote on the National Highway there is such a model place of worship housing the Qurā'n, the Gita, an idol and Muslim *jānamāz* (prayer rug) all together.

The dramatic clubs are fostered in every village, and in the name of culture young boys and girls are taught to sing and dance. Their mixed gathering is encouraged. The participants are awarded certificates, and

trophies. Under the label of cultural troops, groups of boys and girls participate in the national and international programs together. The college girls are trained to entertain diplomats and other dignitaries. Every Indian minister and foreign officials or leaders are asked to visit the women's college, where the girls are usually encouraged to use immodest and un-Islamic dresses. Through the cultural tours and other such activities Muslim girls bereft of their traditions are exposed to a new naked, nude, and immodest colonizing culture. Immorality and sex scandals are well bred. Drinking alcohol is spread in the society. And now the drug addiction is introduced. In 1982, when the Muslims led a movement for prohibition, a spokesman of the ruling party expressed in the legislative assembly that prohibition could not be enforced in the State for it would affect the promotion of tourism.

Educational Onslaught:

Multipurpose programs are introduced in the schools, colleges and especially in universities to brain wash the students. The Institutes of Education at district levels and one on the state level are working for the training of the teachers in promoting an alien culture. The new curriculum is designed to cut the youth from Muslim cultural roots and create doubts about Islam. Religion is presented as and reduced to a necessary evil developed by the ignorant superstitious man. The Muslim history is depicted as a story of bloodshed and exploitation. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH grouped with leaders of some religions is depicted to have 'felt' at the age of forty that he was sent by Allah to guide his nation.³

Economic Devastation:

Jammū and Kashmir economy is being reduced to a consumption society. As has been the case with the colonizers in other regions of the world, India seems to reduce J&K to a market for her productions and the local inhabitants as the consumers wholly and solely depend on Indian goods. This is especially the case with Kashmir valley where even eggs and onion have to be imported.

The traditional industries of wood carving, Pashminā and Shawl manufacturing praised by the poets of the yore, have been suffering right since the Indian occupation of the State. The market of these items which once did and can even now compete in the international markets is limited by the aggressor. In spite of the increase in production, Kashmir Muslim producers are exploited by the Hindū Lālas (Hindū businessmen) of Delhi and Punjab. The development of fake and duplicate items at Ludhiana's, etc. at cheaper prices affects Kashmir home and handicraft industries adversely.

The Fruit industry suffers badly especially due to the unnatural and dangerous road, the only connection between the rest of the world and the Valley after its occupation. The fruits could easily be imported to the world market via the natural and well tread road between Rawalpindi and Srinagar. There is also a common feeling and view that germs of scab (a disease affecting the apple) badly have been introduced by the colonizer to create market for its pesticides and to damage the fruit industry in Kashmir and safe guard and protect the Indian Kalu-Simla fruit from competition.

The non-Kashmiri Hindū merchants hover the economic scene in the state. They manage to get the State-subject certificates i.e., the

citizenship of the State to enable them to purchase land. Some others get the land on lease for 90 years. Many other methods are used by the colonizers to reduce the Muslim majority to the level of a minority. The tampering of census records, issuing fake State subject certificates, enticing sterilization etc are some of the measures exposed even by the political leaders. The Muslim businessmen are economically dependent. All the finance corporations and banking institutions are managed by alien business magnates or the puppet Govt. The corruption breeds especially in these institutions. The State industrial development corporation and other government bodies provide loans to unemployed youth for setting up small scale industries. The corruption, the lack of sufficient electric power to run the factories, limited markets and exorbitant rates of interest siphon the income, if any, of these young businessmen. The poverty is thus injected. The common villager and farmer is the victim of a host of economic problems, so he is hardly in a position to think of any resistance.

To perpetuate the occupation of the State, the Indian government has adopted a policy of keeping the Muslims away from the key positions in the government in the central offices, and anyone can hardly find any local Muslims. More than 90% of the posts in the departments of post and telegraph, income tax, radio, TV, and passport offices are held by the Hindū Minority. Legally the positions in the State offices are reserved for the state-subjects, but practically the non-state-subjects are well posted. Many key posts are held by the aliens on the deputation. Since educationally Muslims have been kept backward, so even in open merit competitions they suffer.

Restrictions on the Press:

The position of Muslim press and intelligentsia is very bad. There are undue restrictions on the press. Those accused or suspected of anti-colonial views are hardly to publish their views or edit a periodical. A heavy price has to be paid by the newspapers or journals for portraying the truth. Most of the Muslim journalists have frequently been put behind the bars. Anything written in the name of Islam is dubbed as communal and anti-national and the writer is made to suffer.

In this occupied region with a population of about 8 million [in 1985], the average circulation of the ordinary and popular newspapers doesn't go beyond a number of a thousand or so. Most of the newspapers belong to some particular sections, groups or parties, and hence do not depict the sentiments of the general suffering and persecuted masses.

In the name of literature only the writings that support communism, and dilution of Islamic ethics are promoted. The supporters of communism and colonial culture receive titles, awards, and financial support. TV and Radio programs are reserved for them. The communists with Muslim names and background are specially planted in institutions of media and education. They received special prizes even from the world colonizer, the USSR and are honored with a tour of the region.

Response to Imperialism:

In spite of having one military man over every ten Muslim heads, the heads and the hearts could never be conquered. The main trend and stream of the Muslim thought and action in the State reacts and responds against the unauthorized, inhuman, illegal and unwanted occupation. The doors of employment for the young thinking Muslims are shut, religious Madrasās and Maktabās are periodically wiped away but the Muslim

society never lost its interest in liberation. All those atrocities are committed by a secular and democratic power claiming respect for all the communities and opportunities for all the sections. "The largest democracy in the East" is enforcing an educational system unacceptable to the majority in Kashmir. Shedding crocodile tears over the apartheid minority government in South Africa, the south Asian colonizer and neo-imperialism is helping in all the ways to perpetuate the hegemony of the Kashmiri Pandits ---- a microscopic minority. The neo-colonial power uses all the methods and measures to develop erotic's and introduce wine and women to kill the resistance in the State. The honor and life, the faith and practice of the Muslims is unsafe. Peace and solidarity is becoming a myth. The Muslim youth in the interrogation centers in Kashmir reminds one of the concentration camps in Siberia. Many of those who complete their term in these interrogation centers suffer from mental and physical diseases. Some because of slow-poisoning and continuous torture die in jails. Bereft of their careers and opportunities, the highly educated and capable young men are harassed and forced to leave the country. Suspension and termination of the services of the employees is a common feature. The conscious, conscientious and thinking – Muslims are the special victims of the Indian oppression. The intelligent, modest, and capable youth who speak or write in favor of Islam and self-determination are rounded up on strange pretexts and allegations. Labels and laws are ready for them to be ensnared by.

J&K, the Integral part of the Global Islamic Umma'h:

The Brahmanic imperialism through its agents and intelligence agencies has created a sense of insecurity and doubts in the Muslim

society of Kashmir. As they say, one doubts one's own self, "May be the man by your side is a spying agent" is a common maxim. This air of doubt has led to political and social disintegration.

No all-round economic, cultural, social and political organization with its roots in the masses is able to emerge. The various religious organizations and political parties represent trends or group movements. The common trend among the general masses in spite of all the persecution, oppressions, victimization, and side-tracking by the duped leaders, is for Islam and freedom. They want to join the Islamic Ummah to be a part of the world of Islam. They know that the borders between the Muslim nation States are transitory, and those between J&K and India, Pakistan and India, Central Asia and Russia are the borders between Islam and *Kufr* (unIslam). Even under thin air of oppression and tyranny when they hear the name of any Muslim country their tongues say *ZINDA'H BĀD*, they listen to the Radio Pakistan with love and emotions expecting some good news. Any news item about the world of Islam in papers and magazines interests them. Bhutto was presented as the symbol of Pakistan, and Kashmiri's were ready to die for him. He was proved a mirage and Zia Ul Haq emerged. For Kashmiri's, he became **Mardi Kāmil** and **Mardi Hāq**, the savior of the Islamic world. Pakistani Team Plays a cricket or hockey match anywhere and Kashmiris are full of prayers for their victory. A match is won by the Pakistani team, and Kashmiris celebrate it, distributing sweets, and making merry and offering thanks to Allah (SWT). The leaders, sincere or cheats can't win them over without saying **PAKISTAN ZAINDA'H BĀD**. The political orator demonstrates a piece of Pak stone-salt and the audience in one voice shout "**PAKISTAN ZAINDA'H ĀD**".

One can't imagine of any gathering or ceremony of marriage or condolence, where the Islam and the world of Islam is not a topic for discussion. A common song recited on marriage ceremonies, and other festive occasions includes

چھ رازی سبز دستار س نبی

پاکستانک غازی های آی

(the Nabi is pleased with the green turban, the Pakistani *ghazis* are coming).

Abdul Hadi Ahmad, fellow of *Idāra'h Ma'arif Islami* Lahore quotes a Kashmiri Mahajir saying that his father on the death bed said

“My son! My last moment is approaching. Alas! I couldn't witness the dawn of freedom. If the blessed event comes in your life time, do come near my grave to announce the tidings so that my soul gets peace. If this desire is not fulfilled in your life-time communicate this *wasīa'h* (will) to your progeny.”⁴

TO CONCLUDE: It may be noted that the Muslim Society of Kashmir is not comparable with the Muslim society of India. However, it is an experimental laboratory for the emerging imperialism in the South Asia. It is the latest version of Muslim Spain, Muslim Central Asia, Muslim Sinkiyang and Tibet. What befalls the Muslims in J&K now may be the destiny of many other Muslim societies in the region in near future. The Muslims through the world, specially their think-tanks and thought-banks, their social scientists and the elite must have the perceptions of the Islamic *Umma'h* and not of a particular nation – state. This should be the case even with the Muslim minorities. Their loyalties must ----

as a global community to eradicate evil and injustice----- be for and towards the *Umma'h* – and not the establishment.

Reference:-

1. Alastair Lamb, *Crises in Kashmir 1947 to 1966*. London, Roulledge and Kagan Paul, page 142.
2. Ibid.,p.143-----
3. *Tahzib ki Kahani*, school text book for class IX.
4. Abdul Hadi Ahmad, “Magbuza Kashmir ki undruniTasweer”, *Urdu Digest*, Lahore, Silver Jubilee Number. Apr, 1986.

